

**Communication Interoperability Working Group**  
**October 18, 2005**  
**Minutes**

**WELCOME, PUBLIC COMMENT AND REVIEW OF MINUTES:**

The Chair, Michael Varney, called the meeting to order at 13:09. The following individuals were in attendance: John Barbagallo (Hartford Hospital), Chuck Beck (DOT), (Robert DiBella (Glastonbury EMD/DEMHS), John Gustafson (CMED-NH), Chris Marvin (CREPC/8<sup>th</sup> Dist Fire), Gordon Shand (DPH), Mike Stemmler (CSP), Matt Valteau (CAP/CSP), Mike Varney (DOIT/CFCA), Keith Victor (West Hartford/CREPC), and Jerry Zarwanski (OSET) Additionally, guests Wayne Bartolotta (Middletown Communications) ODP/ICTAP (Doug Harder and Leo Guilmette) were present.

There were no public comments.

The 15 September 2005 minutes were approved and will post on the website.

**SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- A. Technical Committee: There was considerable discussion regarding the need to conduct an audit for each of the control station locations to check their usability and coverage area among other items. Gordon Shand commented on issues he found while operating in North Canaan and a lack of operational coverage by existing repeater locations and control stations. Antenna locations of several existing installations were also discussed, which appear to no have been installed optimally. Mike Stemmler indicated during this discussion that at any time that a field unit trying to use this system has a need for technical assistance all they need to do is contact the NCS immediate and someone will be contacted to address the issue. Mike Stemmler also reiterated that his staff is more that willing to check and test the system whenever there is a reported problem. It was discussed by the group to update the issued reference cards and procedures to reflect this ability to call for immediate technical support. Wayne Bartolotta discussed his successful use of the system in Middletown for 4<sup>th</sup> of July and other events using a decon trailer for their repeater, however they had trouble monitoring radio traffic on the system from their dispatch center. Mr. Stemmler indicated that they would research this issue and it again was reiterated by the group that this is the reason the control station audits are needed. Chuck Beck raised the question regarding licensing for the control stations, currently all sites are under the DPS license and are installed such. Municipalities may license their sites individually, they would just need to initiate their own license and change the antenna height if needed.
- B. Training & Exercise Workgroup: Groups will work with Paul Benyeda at DEMHS to update the training program and develop how programs will be delivered.

**REPORT OF INTEROPERABILITY USAGE AND INCIDENTS DURING PREVIOUS MONTH:**

No specific incidents were discussed. Questions were raised regarding who keeps the logs of activation of the fixed DPS repeater sites so the committee would know usage. It was explained that this is tracked in an activity log by the message center staff for requests. Sgt

Nolan's staff maintains this. In addition there is a automated system which indicates the activation of each site automatically, however this does not indicate the reason for activation whether it be for a monthly technical test, trouble-shooting or incident activation. In addition all activations are alarmed so that they can be checked on, in the case of an inadvertent activation or error. These records are kept by Mike Stemmlers staff. Mr. Stemmler also indicated that monthly checks are done at each tower site to check for operation and antenna output for each repeater. Mike Stemmler also explained how the system is designed using 1 voter and 2 repeaters per indicated site.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. Status on Portable Radio Inventory & Training Programs: DPS is currently updating their records of distribution, they will provide them to the committee to assist with locating distributed radios as well as assisting in determining which agents have yet to have radios delivered. A questions was raised regarding the host locations of the decon trailers – they are posted online within the mass decontamination plan located on the DEMHS and CFPC websites.
- B. Report on ICALL/ITAC Monthly Test & Training Issues: It was reiterates by DPS that organizations may test the system whenever they wish and this is encouraged so that the user communities understand their coverage areas. It was discussed that this will be part of the control station audit process.
- C. Update on Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI): ICTAP representatives reported that they are working on the MDT RFP that should be finalized within the next week. Discussed how to incorporate North Haven fire into overall mutual aid plan. Possibility for future of ICTAP funding in FY 06.Still putting together program for 4.9 GHz
- D. Update on 2003, 2004 & 2005 Homeland Security Grant Programs: There is a set aside to pay for the STOCS boxes, and another set aside for other equipment within the 04 and 05 set-aside monies. Review of FY 2003 grants for Colebrook and Westbrook were reviewed. Also were mentioned 3 more ICALL/ITAC sites are being addressed using Federal DOT funds.
- E. Update on Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) activities: Mike Varney stated that a written plan is required. Southwest Region, with Norwalk as the host, has had several meetings with the local communities. ICTAP has finally released the CASM software package for the input of frequencies, etc. authorization will be pursued within the next month and training will follow once accounts have been established.
- F. RFI for STOCS equipment: Documents are being reviewed; the technical sub-committee has had several meetings regarding the project.
- G. RFP for master catalog: document is being drafted should be completed early November for advertising.
- H. Briefing for municipal CEOs and POCs – September 20<sup>th</sup> : Presentation was given by Mike Varney and is posted on the DEMHS website for review.
- I.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Request from CT-IMT4: CT planning region #4 (eastern CT has created a level III Incident Management Team. This team contacted chairman varney for radio equipment. Mike Varney indicated that the request was not detailed and that he would contact them to set-up a meeting to review their requirements and then have them submit a formal

request to the committee. The general consensus of the group was to support the request but no action can be taken until clarified.

- B. January 2006 report to Legislature: draft report on committee's activities has been submitted for inclusion into report.
- C. Other: Discussion of EMS radio distribution status: Still unclear Gordon Shand, Mike Stemmler and Rosemary Salerno to meet to iron out issues. It was also noted that the radios loaned to USAR may need to be returned to facilitate this distribution.

**CORRESPONDENCE/GRANT REVIEWS:**

- A. Request process used for DHS grant reviews: requested for Norwich, Darien, and DPS were noted as approved. East Haddam was disapproved.

Next meeting will be **November 15, 2005 1300 hours location to be determined**

Meeting adjourned at 1550 hours.